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Annual Report
OF THE
Medical Officer of Health
FOR
No. 2 SANITARY AREA
DEVON

1946

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Annual Report

for No. 2 Sanitary Area for 1946,

comprising:—

AXMINSTER URBAN, AXMINSTER RURAL, HONITON BOROUGH,
HONITON RURAL, AND SEATON URBAN.

DUNCOMBE STEELE-PERKINS, *Med. Officer of Health.*

*To the Chairmen and Councillors for the
District comprising No. 2 Sanitary Area.*

I have much pleasure in presenting my Annual Report for 1946.

The Report this year will include under each Area the proposed Building programme for 1946, but in view of the present restrictions, it is highly improbable that the programme as laid down will be completed for some years. Although some progress has been made during the year with the Housing programme, the results are terribly disappointing, and the appeals I receive for Housing accommodation are distressing beyond words, because however willing my Councils are to fulfil their obligations, they seem to run up against a brick wall, and as the reasons are so well known to my Councils, I need not waste time by re-stating the facts in my Report, but I do emphasize the fact, that if a little more of the Housing problem had been left to Private Enterprise, a very large number of Houses would have been built and occupied by now.

Scabies.—This I am glad to say has practically disappeared from No. 2 Area.

Diphtheria.—I am very pleased to report that only three cases of Diphtheria were reported. All three cases occurred in non-immunised children. The cases reported were of a very interesting nature. Two cases reported in the Honiton Rural District were of the Carrier type only, and the other case occurring in Axminster Urban District was Clinical Diphtheria only. In the Carrier type, the germ is present in the throat, but no symptoms developed, but is a source of great danger to others. The Clinical type occurred in a case at Axminster, which had all the marked symptoms of a very acute case of Diphtheria, but the germ could not be located.

During the year I visited all Schools and held Clinics for Immunisation against Diphtheria throughout my area, with a very satisfactory response, also a large number of pre-school children were Immunised under the Private Practitioner Scheme. It is very rare now to get a refusal from parents, in fact, parents are now eager to have their children safeguarded.

Scarlet Fever.—During the year eight cases were reported: Axminster Rural District, 6; Honiton Rural District 1; and Honiton Borough, 1. The cases were all so mild that they do not call for comment.

Water Supplies. Very little progress has been made towards the formation of a Joint Scheme, many conferences have been held, and although Honiton Borough have now purchased the Wilmington Water Works, the provision of water supplies to every Village is still a dream of the future. Honiton Borough, now being the owners of the Wilmington Water supply, have generously offered to supply the water to any area requiring it, at an exceptionally reasonable rate. I will deal more fully with the water supplies under each area.

I would like to extend my grateful thanks to my Sanitary Inspectors for their close co-operation during 1946, and who have been terribly overworked through shortness of Staff.

AXMINSTER URBAN.

Area	...	...	1,300 acres
Population	...	...	2,476
Rateable Value	...	...	£18,640
Penny Rate produces	...	...	£74

Infectious Disease.

The following cases of Infectious Disease were notified during the year, and is a wonderful record for any Urban District, and one to be very highly satisfied with, as stated in my opening remarks. The case of Diphtheria was a clinical case only.

	1945	1946
Measles ...	6 cases	0 cases
Diphtheria ...	0 "	1 "
Whooping Cough	0 "	1 "
Scarlet Fever	0 "	0 "
Para Typhoid	0 "	0 "
Erysipelas	1 "	0 "
Pneumonia	0 "	1 "
Puerpural Pyrexia	1 "	0 "
Cerebro Spinal	1 "	0 "
Oph. Neon.	1 "	0 "

Deaths.

Number of Deaths registered from all causes:—

1945—(8 Males, 12 Females)	...	20
1946—(14 Males, 24 Females)	...	38

Live Births.

Number of Births registered:—

1945—(20 Males, 24 Females) and includes 6 illegitimate births	...	44
1946—(30 Males, 17 Females) and includes 5 illegitimate births	...	47

Still Births.

Number of above registered :—

1945—(Nil registered) ...	...	...	0
1946—(1 Female registered)	...	...	1

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

1945—1 Death was registered.

1946—Nil Deaths were registered.

Immunisation.—The number of children Immunised at Axminster School at my Clinic was 26, mostly pre-school age, that is under 5, and in addition 12 more were done by their own Doctor under the County Council scheme.

During the year I continued my Immunisation Clinics with most satisfactory results, the number of children attending these Clinics being well up to the average, and I am glad again to report only one case of Diphtheria occurred during the year—the first case of Diphtheria since 1941, when I commenced my Immunisation Clinics. This is a splendid record, and one to be well satisfied with.

There has also been a remarkable absence of Infectious Disease, as you will observe from the tabulated list.

Water Supplies.

The position is the same as I reported in 1945, and a Regional Scheme will be of great assistance, as the Urban supplies have to be augmented by supplies from the Rural District.

Deaths.—The number of Deaths registered was 38, and the causes of death were as follows :—

Tuberculosis to Respiratory System	...	2
Influenza	... ..	1
Cancer	... ..	6
Intra-Cranial Vascular Lesions	...	9
Heart Disease	... ..	10
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	...	3
Bronchitis	... ..	2
Pneumonia	... ..	1
Appendicitis	... ..	1
Nephritis	... ..	2
All other causes	... ..	1

Births.—The Births show a slight increase, 47 births as against 44 in 1945, and again I have to record 6 illegitimate births.

Housing.

I give below a statement showing the proposed Housing programme, which if it could be completed in its entirety, would go a long way to solving the Housing shortage, which is really very acute in the Axminster Urban District, but this programme, even if all the proposed houses were completed, would not be sufficient, as there are approximately 260 applicants for Council Houses in the Urban Area alone, and to add to our immense difficulties, at the time of my writing this Report, there has been a very large cutting down of all Housing programmes owing to essential materials being in such short supply. One cannot estimate or foresee when we shall be in a position to complete our programme. It is all so very disheartening to all those who deserve decent living conditions, and heartbreaking to your Officials who have to be continually amending their programmes, and to listen to the heartbreaking interviews with so many people who had lived in such high hopes of a decent home at last.

Site	No. of Houses to be built	No. of Houses started before 31/12/46	No. of Houses completed at 31/12/46
Stoney Lane ...	26	26	Nil
Boxfield Road ... Temporary Houses)	11	Nil	Nil
Boxfield Road ... (Permanent Houses)	72	Nil	Nil

There are approximately 260 applicants for Council Houses in the Urban District.

AXMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT.

Area ...	51,468 acres
Population ...	10,740
Rateable Value ...	£50,746
Penny Rate produces ...	£209
No. of Parishes ...	14

Infectious Disease.

The following cases of Infectious Disease were notified in 1946:—

	1945	1946
Measles ...	192 cases	5 cases
Pneumonia ...	6 "	7 "
Diphtheria ...	0 "	0 "
Whooping Cough ...	10 "	11 "
Scarlet Fever ...	2 "	6 "
Erysipelas ...	0 "	1 "
Typhoid ...	0 "	0 "
Puerpural Pyrexia ...	0 "	0 "
Cerebro Spinal ...	1 "	0 "
Encephalitis Lethargica ...	1 "	0 "

Deaths.

1945—(72 Males, 71 Females)	...	...	143
1946—(83 Males, 73 Females)	...	...	156

Live Births.

1945—(71 Males, 57 Females)	...	...	128
11 illegitimate births were registered and are included in the above total of 128.			
1946—(103 Males, 97 Females)	...	...	200
13 illegitimate births were registered and are included in the above total of 200.			

Still Births.

1945—4 Still Births were registered (1 illegitimate).
1946—6 Still Births were registered (0 illegitimate).

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

1945—5 Deaths were registered (3 legitimate and 2 illegitimate).
1946—7 Deaths were registered (6 legitimate and 1 illegitimate).

Infectious Disease.—As you will see from the Infectious Disease Table (which is a wonderful record for any Area, and one to be proud of), we had a very big outbreak of Measles in 1945, with the result that in 1946 the number of cases of Measles dropped to only 5 cases. There were 6 cases of Scarlet Fever, all of a very mild type. I note with great pleasure that it is now several years since any cases of Puerperal Fever have been reported. This speaks very highly of your Nursing facilities in your area, especially to the District Nurses. Once again I have to record no cases of Diphtheria, which is highly satisfactory, especially to me, as I have persevered with the Immunisation of children since 1941, and I think the results of the Immunisation speak for itself. The number of children Immunised by me in the Rural Schools, excluding Axminster Council Schools, was 92, and in addition, 17 more were Immunised by their own Doctor under the County Council Immunisation Scheme, and I understand a large number were also privately done. The majority of these children were all of pre-school age, that is under 5 years, and some of your Schools have been 100 per cent. Immunised.

Deaths.—These remain about the average for the District, 156 as compared with 143 in 1945.

The chief causes of death in the Area were :—

Whooping Cough	...	...	1
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	...	2
Cancer	...	...	24
Diabetes	...	...	1
Intra-Cranial Vascular Lesions	...	...	26
Heart Disease	...	...	52
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	...	...	6
Bronchitis	...	...	8
Pneumonia	...	...	9
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	...	...	1
Other Digestive Diseases	...	...	2
Nephritis	...	...	3
Premature Birth	...	...	1
Con. Mal., Birth Injuries, Infant Disease	...	...	5
Suicide	...	...	1
Other Violent Causes	...	...	4
All Other Causes	...	...	10

Births.—These show a very big increase, 200 as against 128 in 1945, and include 13 illegitimate births.

Water Supplies.

The Water Supplies have been fairly satisfactory in quantity throughout the Area for 1946. As regards quality this varies considerably—wells for private houses seldom give good results, and every effort is being made to provide a piped supply throughout the District. As regards Council and other public supplies, here again these vary, but schemes are going forward for the provision of alternative supplies where the present supply is unsatisfactory. The mains are being laid to supply Hawkchurch, and the scheme is before the Ministry to supply Musbury, Whitford and Kilmington. The consulting engineer is preparing a scheme to supply all the remainder of the unsatisfactory parts of the district. The Council also has under consideration the taking over of the Beer water supply. In addition, five main extensions at Raymond's Hill, one at Smallridge, and one at Musbury to the Council Houses, have been started and the schemes completed, and the materials ordered for one at Dalwood and one at Chardstock.

11 samples were taken for chemical analysis and all proved satisfactory, five of these had been treated to deal with plumbosolvency. 25 were taken for bacteriological examination, of these, three were of treated water and were satisfactory, and one of treated water was unsatisfactory; this latter was put right, and the next sample proved satisfactory. Of untreated water, one was satisfactory, and 15 unsatisfactory; these unsatisfactory supplies will be eliminated by the schemes mentioned above. Details of the population supplied by mains and standtaps are as follows :

Parish.		Mains.	Standtaps.
Axminster Hamlets	...	474	Nil
Axmouth	...	243	51
Beer	...	1218	Nil
Chardstock	...	378	Nil
Colyton	...	1664	Nil
Combpyne and Rousdon	...	509	Nil
Dalwood	...	18	30
Hawkechurch	...	Nil	Nil
Kilminster	...	Nil	30
Membury	...	71	14
Musbury	...	6	225
Shute	...	Nil	Nil
Stockland	...	148	Nil
Uplyme	...	473	Nil

Drainage and Sewerage.

A scheme is now before the Ministry for the sewerage of Uplyme, and a scheme being prepared for the villages of Musbury, Whitford and Kilminster. No extensions have been carried out during the year.

Housing.

I append a statement showing the Rural Council's proposed Housing Scheme for 1946, but as you all know, the high hopes we all had of seeing a large part of our programme completed in 1946 has been frustrated, chiefly owing to the lack of essential materials, with the result we have been instructed to cut down our schemes to almost frustration point, and it seems to me that we shall not be able to properly re-house our people for many years to come. The number of applicants for new houses increases daily, and it becomes more and more difficult to explain to the applicants why their housing requirements have not been satisfied.

Site	No. of houses to be built	No. of houses started before 31/12/46	No. of houses completed at 31/12/46
Beer, Clapp's Lane ...	6	6	Nil
Chardstock, Goldsmith's Lane	4	4	Nil
Chardstock, Village ...	22 (12 at first)	Nil	—
Coly Vale, Colyton ...	28	Nil	—
Colyford, Swedish ...	6	6	Nil
Combpyne & Rousdon	4	Nil	—
Dalwood ...	8 (4 at first)	4	Nil
Hawkechurch ...	12 (4 at first)	4	Nil
Kilminster ...	3	Nil	—
Membury ...	10 (4 at first)	Nil	—
Musbury ...	8	8	Nil
Shute, Whitford Site ...	2	Nil	—
Stockland ...	10 (4 at first)	Nil	—
Uplyme ...	32 (8 or 12 at first)	Nil	—

Chard Road Hospital—Conversion of 13 Wards into 52 Dwellings.

It is not possible to give the number of applications for Council Houses in the Rural District as respective Parish Councils also receive applications direct, as well as those made to the R.D.C., and in some cases there may be duplication.

HONITON RURAL DISTRICT.

Area	...	...	61,265 acres
Population	...	...	6,825
No. of Parishes	...	...	22
Rateable Value	...	...	£24,715
Penny Rate Produces	...	...	£106/16/7

Infectious Disease.

The following cases of Infectious Disease were notified in 1946, and with the exception of the two Carrier cases of Diphtheria and a small outbreak of Whooping Cough, it has been a most satisfactory year. The absence of Puerpural Fever again pays tribute to the efficiency and high standard of work of the Nurses. The two cases of Scarlet Fever were of a very mild type.

		1945	1946
Scarlet Fever	...	5 cases	2 cases
Diphtheria	...	1 „	2 „
Whooping Cough	...	0 „	30 „
Measles	...	89 „	16 „
Pneumonia	...	8 „	6 „
Erysipelas	...	0 „	3 „
Puerpural Pyrexia	...	0 „	0 „

Immunisation.—I held Clinics in all the Rural Schools, with very satisfactory results. At the various Schools I Immunised 84 children, mostly children of pre-school age, that is before reaching the age of 5 years.

Deaths.

Number of deaths registered from all causes:—

1945—(45 Males, 41 Females)	...	...	86
1946—(53 Males, 37 Females)	...	...	90

Live Births.

Number of Live Births registered:—

1945—(78 Males, 53 Females)	131
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The number of illegitimate births registered was 16, and are included in the above total of 131.

1946—(69 Males, 50 Females)	119
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The number of illegitimate births registered was 8, and are included in the above total of 119.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

1945—5 Deaths were registered (5 Males, 0 Female)
including 1 illegitimate.

1946—5 Deaths were registered (3 Males, 2 Female)
including 1 illegitimate.

Still Births.

1945—Number of Still Births registered was 2 (legitimate).

1946—Number of Still Births registered was 4 (1 illegitimate).

Births.—These show a decrease, 119 as compared with 131 in 1945.

Deaths.—The number of Deaths registered were 90 as compared with 86 in 1945. The chief causes of death were:—

Cerebro Spinal Fever	...	...	1
Cancer (all forms)	...	...	14
Intra-Cranial Vascular Lesions	...	...	10
Heart Disease	...	...	26
Other Disease of Circulatory System	...	...	3
Bronchitis	...	...	6
Pneumonia	...	...	1
Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	2
Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	...	...	3
Other Digestive Diseases	...	...	2
Nephritis	...	...	1
Other Maternal Causes	...	...	1
Premature Births	...	...	3
Con. Mal., Birth Injuries, Infant Disease	...	...	2
Violent Causes...	...	...	2
All Other Causes	...	...	13

Water Supplies.

These were dealt with very fully in my 1945 Report, and I have nothing to add, except to again stress the extreme urgency of the situation, and we are still awaiting a decision as to a Regional Scheme; unless progress is made considerably faster than in the past, the situation is going to become really desperate. I feel perfectly satisfied that only a Regional Scheme, with the Wilmington supplies used as the main source, is the only solution to the Rural requirements.

The water supply is generally satisfactory in quality, but quantity is inadequate in the areas of Gittisham, Sheldon, Cotleigh, Offwell, Wilmington, also parts of Branscombe, Sidmouth Junction, Payhembury, Broadhembury and Plymtree. Schemes are going ahead for the majority of these Parishes.

There are pipe supplies at Branscombe, Sheldon, Northleigh, Yarcombe and Dunkeswell. All are untreated.

There is slight plumbo-solvent action at Branscombe, and all new domestic installations are installed in copper.

Parish.	Houses connected direct.	Standpipes.
Awliscombe	—
Branscombe	42
Broadhembury	2 (Private Mains, no information as to numbers connected).
Buckerell	—
Combe Raleigh	7
Cotleigh	—
Dunkeswell	15
Farway	—
Feniton	—
Gittisham	—
Luppitt	—
Monkton	6
Northleigh	20
Offwell	16 (Private Main)
Payhembury	—
Plymtree	—
Sheldon	12
Southleigh	10 (Private Main)
Talaton	—
Upottery	1 (Private Supply, no information as to numbers connected).
Wilmington	13
Yarcombe	20

Sewerage.

Sidmouth Junction. Owing to the water-logged state of the ground where the effluent has to discharge itself into the sub-soil, these works, for the first time since they were improved, have to a certain extent failed to function properly, but this is only temporary, and as soon as the fine weather comes, it should speedily right itself. The difficulty here, as all the Council know, is that the effluent has to be discharged into a soak-away underground, and in such unprecedented rain as has been experienced during the past winter, the ground became water-logged, and no system on earth could deal with it, except one with an outflow into a River. This is impossible here, and we have to do the best we can by improvising in such emergencies.

Feniton Works. These have continued to function satisfactory.

No new works and additions to existing systems, apart from 6 small Septic Tanks to serve new Council Houses at Awliscombe, Combe Raleigh, Monkton, Northleigh, Upottery and Wilmington.

Housing.

Fortunately, Honiton Rural District Council got away with a very good start, and we are in a much happier position than some of our neighbouring Councils, and I append a tabulated record of the Housing programme, as at December 31st, 1946.

Parish	No. of Houses to be built	No. of Houses started before 31/12/46	No. of Houses completed at 31/12/46
Awliscombe ...	4	4	4
Branscombe ...	4	Nil	Nil
Combe Raleigh ...	2	2	Nil
Dunkeswell ...	2	Nil	Nil
Gittisham ...	2	Nil	Nil
Monkton ...	4	4	Nil
Northleigh ...	2	2	2
Offwell ...	2	2	Nil
Payhembury ...	6	6	Nil
Upottery (Rawridge)	2	2	Nil
Wilmington...	6	6	6
Yarcombe ...	2	2	Nil
Totals ...	38	30	12

During the year 1946, the Council have also taken over an Air Ministry Camp at Weston, Branscombe, and have re-housed 18 families there. A scheme for converting these hutments into self-contained dwellings is proceeding.

Further Housing schemes are proposed at Broadhembury, Cotleigh, Feniton, Luppitt, Plymtree and Upottery (Village), and it is hoped that these will all be put in hand during the forthcoming year.

As at 31st December, 1946, the number of applicants for Council Houses in this District totals 139.

HONITON BOROUGH.

Area ...	3,134 acres
Population ...	3,333
Rateable Value ...	£28,374
Penny Rate produces ...	£116 1s. 0d.

Deaths.

Number of Deaths registered from all causes :—

1945—(28 Males, 21 Females)	...	49
1946—(19 Males, 21 Females)	...	40

Live Births.

Number of Live Births registered :—

1945—(32 Males, 26 Females)	...	58
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8 illegitimate births were registered, and are included in the above total of 58.

1946—(22 Males, 23 Females)	...	45
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4 illegitimate births were registered, and are included in the above total of 45.

Still Births.

1945—1 Still Birth was registered.

1946—2 Still Births were registered.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

1945—2 Deaths were registered (1 legitimate and 1 illegitimate).

1946—2 Deaths were registered (both legitimate).

Infectious Disease.

The following cases were notified in 1946:—

	1945	1946
Scarlet Fever ...	0 cases	1 cases
Diphtheria ...	1 „	0 „
Whooping Cough ...	1 „	10 „
Measles ...	8 „	4 „
Erysipelas ...	2 „	1 „
Pneumonia ...	9 „	2 „
Puerpural Pyrexia ...	0 „	0 „
Encephalitis Lethargica ...	0 „	1 „
Opthal Neon ...	1 „	0 „

The health of the Borough has been exceptionally good, and is a record, which, like 1945, will stand for many a day.

This is an extremely good record, and one we can be quite satisfied with. There are two points in the Infectious Disease worth noting, and that is, we have been free of Diphtheria and Puerpural Fever, the latter speaks very highly of the efficiency of the District Nurses.

Immunisation.—I have held my Annual Clinics at the School, and they have been very well attended. At my last Clinic 40 children attended and were Immunised, mostly of pre-school age, and I am perfectly satisfied. We have a very high percentage of our Borough children Immunised.

Deaths.—The number of deaths registered were 40 as compared with 49 in 1945. The chief causes of death were:—

Cancer ...	7
Diabetes ...	1
Intra-Cranial Vascular Lesions ...	6
Heart Disease ...	11
Bronchitis ...	4
Pneumonia ...	1
Digestive Diseases ...	1
Con. Mal., Birth Injuries, Infant Disease	2
Suicide ...	1
Road Traffic Accidents ...	1
Other Violent Causes ...	2
All Other Causes ...	3

Water Supplies.

The Borough is in a very happy position, with the Wilmington supply now assured to the Borough, which, when all sources are tapped, will yield nearly 1,000,000 gallons a day, leaving a very large surplus for a Regional supply, which I sincerely trust will soon materialise, as the neighbouring districts are desperately short of water.

The water at Wilmington is on the hard side, whereas the supply from St. Cyres, which, by the way, is almost sufficient in the winter for the Borough needs, is very soft, and is plumbo-solvent. Both waters are pure and are chlorinated.

During the past year the Town has been supplied with water from the following works:—

St. Cyres Public Supply.

Copper Castle Public Supply.

Wilmington Supply (originally installed by the War Dept. for supplying Heathfield Camp).

St. Cyres Supply.—This gravitation supply is not normally sufficient to supply the whole of the Borough, but no shortage now occurs in the Town as the Wilmington Supply is used for augmentation.

Bacteriological samples taken from the St. Cyres supply at one time proved unsatisfactory, but this has been remedied by more efficient chlorination and the complete renewal of the filter beds media. Lime treatment is carried out in view of the plumbo-solvency of the water.

Wilmington Supply.—As this supply has only recently been acquired from the War Department, regular sampling has not yet been instituted, but there is no reason to assume that any pollution is taking place.

The yield of water from this supply is far more than required by the Borough Council, and the works are located in a favourable position to enable the Council to supply water to neighbouring Authorities.

Copper Castle Works.—These small works are now boosted with water from the Wilmington supply.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The Sewerage works appear to be working well, and no complaints have been received in respect of river pollution. If in the future any extensive development takes place to the west of the Town, it may be that new sewers, or the enlargement of the existing sewers, will have to be made.

Sewerage Works.—These works continue to function well, and I have received no complaints, as in past years, as to smells arising from same, and no complaints as to sewage pollution of the River Otter. At the same time I receive frequent complaints of oil being discharged into the Otter, and as this oil has first to pass through the works, it must considerably decrease the activity of the bacteria. This oil apparently comes from one of the numerous garages in the town, and is naturally very difficult to trace.

Housing.

I append the position of the Housing situation as at the 31st December, 1946.

Site.	No. of Houses.	Position to date.
Northcote Lane ...	20 Permanent ...	Site work completed, and erection of houses commenced, but delay owing to the labour shortage.
Streamers Meadows ...	26 Permanent ...	Site work completed. About to commence erection.
Clapper Lane ...	12 Temporary ...	Site work in course of construction.

Proposed Programme for 1947.—The Council are considering the purchase of three additional permanent housing sites for the erection of upwards of 100 houses, and it is proposed to develop one of these sites at a very early date by the use of private builders under Ministry of Health Circular No. 92.

Private Enterprise.—One house was completed, and one practically completed, by December 31st, 1946, and a scheme for the building of six houses is well under way.

Number of applicants for Council Houses in the Borough is 179.

General Observations.—The progress in the Borough is slow owing to the labour shortage, and the position does not appear to improve, although strict licensing of private work is being carried out. Also, the machinery for dealing with the clearance of housing sites, and obtaining approval to the various sites and tenders by the appropriate Ministry Departments, is very cumbersome. The mass of documents that have to be completed in order to obtain materials also tends to slow up progress, and even priorities seem to have very little value at times.

The system of the Ministry accepting the lowest tenders for housing contracts is not all that could be desired, as it tends to attract builders from other areas with no labour; whereas the local builder, even if his tender is slightly higher, is normally in a position to supply labour direct on site, and better co-operation would be obtained.

I am convinced that if Local Authorities were given a free hand in the matter of housing, that a considerable number of houses could be erected in a very short time.

SEATON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Area	...	...	1,190.43 acres
Population	...	...	2,957
Rateable value	...	...	£31,378
Penny Rate produces	...	...	£125/5/8

Deaths.

Number of Deaths registered from all causes:—

1945—(34 Males, 22 Females)	...	...	56
1946—(21 Males, 29 Females)	...	...	50

Live Births.

Number of Live Births registered :—

1945—(21 Males, 16 Females)	...	...	37
7 illegitimate births are included in the 37 registered.			
1946—(12 Males, 21 Females)	...	...	33
2 illegitimate births are included in the 33 registered.			

Still Births.

1945—1 was registered.

1946—1 was registered.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

1945—1 was registered.

1946—2 were registered.

Infectious Disease.

The following cases were notified during the year :—

		1945	1946
Scarlet Fever	...	0 cases	0 cases
Puerpural Pyrexia	...	1 „	0 „
Whooping Cough	...	11 „	20 „
Measles	...	91 „	6 „
Pneumonia	...	4 „	5 „
Erysipelas	...	2 „	1 „
Diphtheria	...	0 „	0 „

As I seem to report every year, Seaton again holds a remarkable freedom from any Major Infectious Disease, and is a report which any Seaside Resort can well be proud of.

It is impossible to escape Measles and Whooping Cough in the youngsters, and although in 1945 (like most Districts), you felt the full force of the Measles epidemic sweeping the Country, this past year your cases have dropped to six, with 20 cases of Whooping Cough ; otherwise your record is most gratifying to me.

Immunisation.—I have held my Annual Clinics at Seaton, and I am glad to report that attendance has been much better, in fact the School is now practically 100 per cent. Immunised, and the children now attending are those of pre-school age, that is under five. The number Immunised at my last Clinic was 12, and two were done by their own Doctor under the County Scheme.

Live Births.—The number of births registered were 33, as compared with 37 in 1945, but, I am glad to say, included in these 33 births were only 2 illegitimate births, which is much better than in 1945, when 7 illegitimate births were registered.

Deaths.—The number of deaths registered from all causes were 50, as compared with 56 in 1945. The causes of death were :

Whooping Cough	...	...	1
Influenza	...	...	2
Cancer (all forms)	...	...	4
Diabetes	...	...	1
Intra-Cranial Vascular Lesions	...	...	5
Heart Disease	...	...	28
Bronchitis	...	...	1
Pneumonia	...	...	1
Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	2
Con. Mal., Birth Injuries, Infant Disease	...	...	1
Violent Causes	...	...	2
All Other Causes	...	...	2

Water Supplies.

Seaton, in a normal season, has sufficient supplies for their needs, but with a large building programme ahead of them, I expect you will find you will have to augment your supplies. Here, a Regional Supply which could be utilised, would be exceedingly useful to Seaton.

Housing.

The Housing situation is still in much the same position as I reported last year, and in order that the position can be clarified, I append a report up to December 31st, 1946, as to the Housing position.

No. of Houses to be built on the Scalwell Lane Estate	64
No. of Houses started before 31/12/46	...
No. of Houses completed by 31/12/46	...
No. of Applications for Houses	...

In addition :—6 Private Houses have been completed.

2 Private Houses under construction.

3 Private Houses converted into Flats (completed).

I quite appreciate the delay is not the fault of my Council, and the causes are beyond their control, made much worse now by the shortage of building material, but it really is a desperate situation, with 150 applications for Houses, and as far as I can see, little chance now of the majority getting any for some years.

I would like to include under Housing the remarks I made last year : "The need for more and more Houses in Seaton is still a desperate cry. The overcrowding, and this leads to immorality, is desperate. I know of no Area so desperate for new Houses as Seaton. I know my Council are doing all they can to get Houses built, but like other Areas they seem to be up against a stone wall, and progress is so slow that it is a heartbreaking job for a Medical Officer of Health to reply to the enormous number of letters he receives, begging and imploring him to help. All I can do is to refer the letters to your Council with my observations, but that does not help these people. A very large programme of building is required in Seaton to satisfy the wants of the people."

Your obedient servant,
DUNCOMBE STEELE-PERKINS,
Medical Officer of Health.

